

DAY AFTER VOTER ID ROW

Meeting without EC nod, fresh bouncer for Gambhir

Delhi Police issues challan against BJP's East Delhi candidate, his opponent Atishi steps up attack

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

THE DELHI Police has issued a challan against BJP's East Delhi candidate Gautam Gambhir after the Election Commission directed them to file an FIR against him for allegedly holding a meeting without permission.

The executive magistrate's letter to the station house officer (SHO) of Lajpat Nagar police station read: "...it is brought to your notice that a public meeting involving Shri Gautam Gambhir was held at Mirpur Balidan Bhawan... on April 25. As certified by you, it was noted that there was no permission obtained for the said event. The entire event was also videographed by your team. In this regard, you are requested to take further necessary action/FIR as per procedure."

When contacted, DCP (Southeast) Chinmoy Biswal said: "We have received a complaint from the election commission on Friday against Gautam Gambhir for conducting a meeting in Lajpat Nagar on Thursday. We took action under the Delhi Police Act and filed a *kalandara* against him after issuing a challan."

However, District Election Officer (DEO) East K Mahesh said he had asked the police to invoke Section 188 of the Indian Penal Code — disobeidance to order promulgated by public servant — and that they had not done so.

This comes a day after AAP's East Delhi candidate Atishi filed a criminal case against Gambhir at a Delhi court for allegedly being registered as voter in two different parts of



Gambhir autographs a supporter's cricket bat during a roadshow in Ashok Nagar Saturday. Praveen Khanna

the city, which is a punishable offence under the Representation of the People Act, 1950.

Earlier this week, the AAP had sought rejection of Gambhir's nomination over a technical discrepancy in his affidavits, but the poll officer dismissed the objection for not being of a substantial nature.

After Saturday's developments, Atishi took a jibe at Gambhir by tweeting, "First,

discrepancies in nomination papers. Then, criminal offence of having 2 voter IDs. Now, FIR for illegal rally. My question to Gautam Gambhir: When you don't know the rules, why play the game?"

While Gambhir did not respond to the EC's intervention, a representative said, "We will respond once we receive a notice from the EC. Our legal team is looking into it. We will deal with it as per legal procedures."

Meanwhile, Arvinder Singh Lovely, Congress's candidate in the East Delhi contest, responded to the developments by tweeting, "We have one candidate who the EC is recommending an FIR against and another one who is doing nothing but pointing fingers. If they can't be trusted to connect with the people in the middle of the election, how can they be trusted to be there for them if they're elected."

Sheila gets election campaign going, with some help from son

ASTHA SAXENA
NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

AT HER first public meet since filing her nomination, three-time former Delhi chief minister and the Congress candidate from North East Delhi Sheila Dikshit Saturday requested the public to vote for the party and send her to Parliament.

"I am sure the Congress will win from this constituency and you will take me to Parliament. Delhi is the capital and we have to work together to change its picture on India's map. I consider your presence as a blessing and hope you all will vote for Congress on May 12 and make Rahul Gandhi ji our Prime Minister," she said in a short speech at Rohtash Nagar.

While Dikshit addressed the public briefly, her son and former MP from East Delhi Sandeep Dikshit did most of the talking. In his 30-minute speech, Sandeep spoke about issues ranging from shortage of hospitals, demonetisation and the Balakot airstrike.

"Five years back, two strange governments came to power in the state and at the Centre. Both of them made false promises and kept people under delusion. The only party that worked in Delhi is Congress and now is the time to redefine the meaning of development in Delhi," he said.

Launching a scathing attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the recent terror attack in Pulwama, the former MP claimed the Congress, during its time at the Centre, believed in groundwork and not advertising. "After the Mumbai terror attack, the Congress retaliated 11 times but never publicised it. This is how it should be. The Modi and Kejriwal governments only believe in advertising rather than actually working on the ground," he said while leaving for a roadshow in the locality.

Enthusiastic supporters shouting slogans such as "Button dabega haath par" and "Congress ko laana hai, Dilli ko swarg banana



Sheila Dikshit is Congress candidate from North East Delhi, boxer Vijender Singh from South. Anil Sharma

hai" seemed to favour the idea of the mother and son campaigning together. "Do do saansad milenge, ek Sheila ji ke roop mein aur ek Sandeep ji ke," said Harkesh Kumar, one of the supporters standing at the public meet.

Divided into 10 Vidhan Sabhas, the North East parliamentary constituency will witness a fight between BJP's sitting MP Manoj Tiwari, AAP's Dilip Pandey and Sheila Dikshit.

The area also witnessed a roadshow by BJP candidate Manoj Tiwari on Saturday morning. Tiwari said that the Modi government believes in the culture of development and taking all together, while Kejriwal supports a "culture of dharna". "The Congress and Aam Aadmi Party play politics by creating problems whereas we try to solve the problems of the country and Delhi through a political process and by working to take Delhi on the path of development," he said.

MEANWHILE

Chadha moves HC against Bidhuri

New Delhi: AAP's South Delhi candidate Raghav Chadha Saturday moved Delhi High Court against the District Magistrate's decision to accept the nomination papers of BJP candidate Ramesh Bidhuri. Chadha alleged that Bidhuri's candidature should be rejected as he did not mention pending criminal cases against him. Bidhuri, however, said: "We all know the kind of conspiracies they have hatched in Delhi... My nomination is clear. India will be run by the Constitution, not by (Arvind) Kejriwal's anarchy."

Atishi a Rajput, she will win, says Sisodia

New Delhi: Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia Saturday said the Congress and BJP are spreading canards about Atishi's religious affiliation. In a tweet, he said Atishi is a Rajput and belongs to the Kshatriya community. "She is a fighter like the Queen of Jhansi. Beware of her, she will win and create history," he wrote.

In Haryana, AAP bets on street plays

New Delhi: The AAP is relying on *nukkad natak*s (street plays) to reach out to voters in Faridabad, where the party's Haryana state president Naveen Jaihind is standing for elections, to make them aware of "AAP's work and BJP's scandals".

'AAP, Cong natural allies as both synonymous with corruption'

SOMYA LAKHANI & SHIVAM PATEL
NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

BJP's Chandni Chowk candidate, Dr Harsh Vardhan, on why he believes people of Delhi "will never forgive" the Chief Minister.

What are the challenges BJP faces in Delhi?

None at all. We are farther ahead in 2019 than we were in 2014 as people have seen our work in the last five years. In 2019, the challenge is for the opposition.

Congress has fielded J P Agarwal, a two-time MP from Chandni Chowk. How do you perceive him? And AAP?

I don't think there is a serious challenge... The competition is between both of them (AAP and Congress) for second and third position. AAP is as much a synonym for corruption as Congress... the two have become natural allies. A party which won 67 seats is kneeling before a party that won zero seats. They say they want to do this to defeat Narendra Modi. I would have been happiest if they allied because it would have been fun to defeat them.

Pollution is a crisis in the capital. Reports indicate it affects lifespan. How do you plan to address this?

These reports are misleading as they are grossly exaggerated. There is no doubt pollution is detrimental to health and can lead to premature death if a person is suffering from a chronic illness... but I disagree with how things are projected. My ministry is undertaking a detailed study on this, along with med-



Harsh Vardhan during a padyatra at Shastri Nagar, Saturday. Praveen Khanna

ical institutions such as AIIMS and experts.

AAP has won praise for mohalla clinics, what are your plans for the health sector?

The ground reality of mohalla clinics is different from the perception that has been created — it's more publicity, less quality healthcare. First, we have to ensure systems that have existed for 70 years are optimally utilised. Healthcare is not just about prescribing medicines.

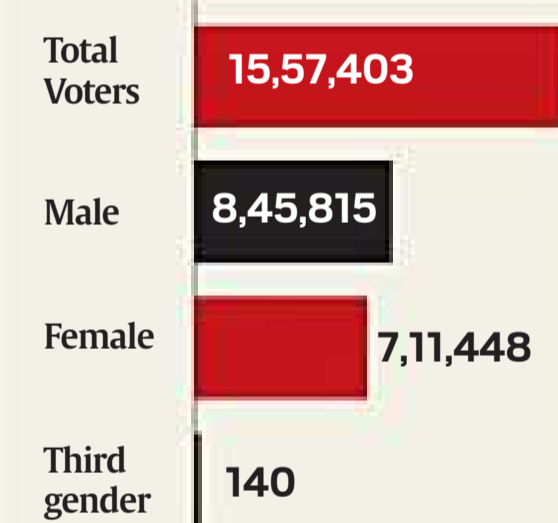
The Delhi government's refusal to adopt the Centre's Ayushman Bharat scheme is stupid and sadistic. The PM asked me to visit patients who benefited under the scheme. So I got their numbers and addresses from AIIMS and RML hospital and met them. For them, Modi is god. I heard this even from

Muslim men and women who received benefits under the scheme. History and the people of Delhi will never forgive Kejriwal.

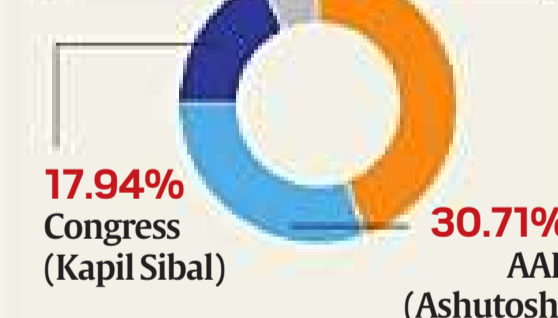
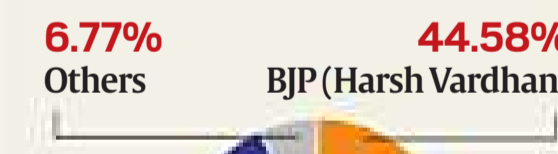
There was some talk about the party asking you to contest from East Delhi.

I was never asked to; the party left that decision to me. There is no doubt that 50 years of my life have been spent in East Delhi — I became a member of the RSS in East, started my public life there, and my practice as an ENT surgeon there lasted over three decades. East Delhi workers were desperate that I come back. Last time I was sent to Chandni Chowk, it was the party's decision, as they wanted me to contest against Kapil Sibal. I have a bond with Chandni Chowk workers now and can't betray them.

CHANDNI CHOWK

Incumbent MP:
Dr Harsh Vardhan

2014 RESULTS VOTE SHARE



CANDIDATES THIS YEAR

BJP: Dr Harsh Vardhan
AAP: Pankaj Gupta
Congress: J P Agarwal

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES
Adarsh Nagar, Shalimar Bagh, Model Town, Wazirpur, Tri Nagar, Shakur Basti, Sadar Bazar, Chandni Chowk, Ballimaran, Matia Mahal

Heeding AAP chief's call, volunteers arrive in city

SHIVAM PATEL
NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

FROM A software engineer to an MBA student, AAP volunteers from across the country are trickling into the capital to help give their party an edge in the May 12 polls.

Around 500 volunteers are working with the party in various capacities, and many more are figuring out plans to come to Delhi after Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal tweeted Thursday: "Except those in Haryana and Punjab, workers from across the country should come to Delhi... We need to defeat the BJP in all seven seats in the city."

Vikas Shukla (30), a software engineer in Bengaluru, has been on leave since April 1 to help AAP's Chandni Chowk candidate Pankaj Gupta in his campaign. His work here involves developing ward-based strategy, data compilation and taking updates on ground work done by workers.

"I take a break from work for one month every time there's elections. It's been five to six years I have been working for this party... It has a presence in Bengaluru, but in Delhi it's completely different because we have done a lot of work here in the last four years, especially in education," he said.

Saurav Chakra (27) from Mumbai, who left his software job in January, has been campaigning door-to-door for the party. Originally from Jharkhand, Shukla said he joined AAP during its campaign against corruption.

"I used to discuss with friends about the Delhi government. They would say that I can't assume AAP has done good work without seeing it for myself. Now that I have visited mohalla clinics and government schools, I am confident they're on the right track," he said. In East Delhi, Amit Badwaik (23), also from Mumbai, has been lending support to social media and administrative work. He is an MBA student at the University of Mumbai, but has taken a break for the elections. "The party does not have the same structure in Mumbai. The way we are campaigning here on social media, it is far exceeding the work of BJP. We are all volunteering to do this work, that's why our campaigning is better than theirs," he said.

AAP's spokesperson Saurabh Bharadwaj said, "We have many outstanding volunteers... Some help with social media, some in roadshows and door-to-door campaigns."



Saurav Chakra left his Mumbai job to join the campaign

BOLNI IN REWARI: ADOPTED BY RAO INDERJIT SINGH

At this adopted village, work remains, so does support for MP

SAKSHIDAYAL
REWARI, APRIL 27

LOCATED BARELY 7 km from National Highway 48, Rewari's Bolni village, adopted by Gurgaon MP Rao Inderjit Singh under the Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana, on the face of it appears better off than many counterparts, with paved lanes, concrete homes, solar lights and three government schools. But a closer look reveals that a lot remains to be done, with drains filled with stagnant water, piles of garbage dumped across the village, defunct solar lights, and residents complaining of water and electricity problems.

Spread across 472 hectares, Bolni is made up of 715 households and has a population of 3,636. Most families are involved in farming and cultivation, while close to 50 claim to have men posted in the Army. According to the 2011

census, 2,566 residents are literate.

On November 7, 2014, Singh submitted a letter to the then Deputy Commissioner of Rewari, informing him of his decision to adopt Bolni. Since then, residents say that though Singh has come to Rewari on multiple occasions, he has visited the village only once.

"These roads were paved from before, but solar lights were installed two years ago. In many places, they have stopped working, people have stolen batteries, one solar light fell down. We asked the sarpanch to either get it removed or fixed, but nothing has been done," said Roshan Lal, a painter, adding that electricity comes for 8-10 hours a day in the village.

Meanwhile, women say the handpump water is too saline. While some have bought water filters, others pay Rs 10 daily to fill water, mostly in 15-litre cans, from water tankers.

"We use handpump water for washing and cleaning... We discussed this with the



Locals said many solar lights have stopped working but authorities are yet to repair them. Amit Mehra

minister when he visited, following which a pipeline was supposed to be installed. But the work is still ongoing," said Santosh, a housewife. Flashing a bill dated March 12, 2018, she claimed residents have already been charged Rs 500 for connections. "They have taken money but not even completed the work. When we heard the village had been adopted, we thought these problems would be fixed. But there has been no improvement," she said.

Bolni has a small medical centre, and the closest government hospital is 4 km away, in Kasola village. It has three government schools and two private ones. But some loopholes remain. At the Government Primary School, for instance, there are only two teachers for 60 students in grades I to V.

A teacher who requested anonymity, claimed: "There were three of us until September, but the other teacher was promoted and was not replaced. We are manag-

ing with interns now."

The village sarpanch Naresh Kumar, however, claimed: "The minister visits us every three-four months, and a lot of work has been done. The roads have been paved, a community centre has been made."

In the lane leading from the main road into Bolni is the home of 88-year-old Ram Chander Yadav, who retired from the Army years ago. He spoke of cleanliness as the biggest problem, pointing to two piles of trash near his home. He claimed municipal corporation workers visit only once in 15-20 days.

"Nothing has changed in the village the last five years... At the end of the day, it is just a formality — he had to adopt some village, so he adopted ours," he said.

But he, like many other residents, also explained why he might give the MP another chance: "He is from the same caste, the same *gotra*, the same household as all of us."

AUTOPSY SUGGESTS SHE WAS SMOTHERED Ex-wing commander's wife found murdered

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

THE WIFE of a former IAF wing commander was found dead at her house in Dwarka on Friday morning. Initial finding has revealed that the entry to the house was "friendly", police said, adding that the autopsy report suggests it was an unnatural death due to smothering.

Police said the woman, 52-year-old Meenu Jain, lived with her husband Vinod Jain, a retired Indian Air Force wing commander, who currently works as a commercial pilot with a leading airline. The couple have a son and a daughter. While the former works in an MNC in Noida and visits his parents on weekends, the daughter is a doctor in Goa. The woman's husband had left for work on April 24, police said.

According to sources familiar with the probe, so far the needle of suspicion is on a man who went to the victim's home on

Thursday afternoon and spent a considerable amount of time there. Sources said CCTV footage from the colony's entrance and the security guard's statement pointed probe officers in the direction of this man.

"The incident came to light on Friday morning after the woman's father contacted police. Around 9.45 pm Thursday, the woman's father called her and she told him she was not feeling well. He wanted to visit her but she refused. On Friday morning, he called again but she didn't answer the phone. When her father and brother went to her place, they found the door locked from the outside," a senior officer said.

Police said they entered the house from the neighbour's balcony and found Jain lying on the floor inside her bedroom, with a pillow nearby. "They called police and rushed the woman to a nearby hospital, where she was declared dead on arrival. Two mobile phones, some cash and jewellery were found missing

from the house, following which a case under IPC sections 302 (murder) and 392 (robbery) was registered at Dwarka (south) police station," said DCP (Dwarka) Anto Alphonse.

A forensic team was called and they found blood on one of the pillows. Police also found that the house was not ransacked, but some cash and jewellery was missing. "It was found that the accused took jewellery from the almirah, and put all the things back in the same place," an officer said.

The investigation has also revealed that police verification of the domestic help had not been conducted, and on Thursday evening, a man had come to the woman's home to service the air conditioner. He left around 8 pm, police said.

"Police are scanning the entrance register and call detail records. She got a call from an unknown person and he was called for questioning, but he told police he had called her by mistake," an officer said.



Hero Honda Chowk underpass last year. Archive

Gurgaon officials take stock of monsoon prep

Gurgaon: Gurgaon Deputy Commissioner Amit Khatri Saturday met with officials from the Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA) and the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to assess the city's monsoon preparedness, and to discuss meas-

ures being taken to prevent waterlogging.

The officials and Gurgaon Police chief Muhammad Akil visited all four underpasses at the Hero Honda Chowk, the Signature Tower junction, Rajiv Chowk and IFFCO Chowk, on National Highway 48 for the

purpose. Officials said NHAI project director Ashok Sharma offered reassurance that the condition of the Hero Honda Chowk would be better this year as compared to the last, with work being done to increase the capacity of the pump sets installed in all four underpasses. ENS

Four, including 5-yr-old, killed as their car rams into truck

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
GREATER NOIDA, APRIL 27

FOUR PEOPLE, including a five-year-old, were killed after the car they were travelling in rammed into a truck on the Eastern Peripheral Expressway late Friday night. The victims, Iqbal, Khalil, Pankaj and Kajju, were driving to Bulandshahr after offering prayers at Ajmer Sharif Dargah.

The driver, Ankit, received minor injuries and was provided treatment, police said.

"We received information about the accident after 2 am. It appears that the driver fell asleep on the wheel and rammed the Swift Dzire into the rear of the truck. While Iqbal (24), Khalil (57) and Pankaj (35) died on the spot, Iqbal's five-year-old son, Kajju, succumbed to injuries in the hospital. A case of rash driving has been registered against the truck driver, who is currently absconding," said Samresh Singh, Station House Officer (Dankaur).

Kajju, seated with his father on the back seat, received in-



Iqbal and his son Kajju were among the four killed when their car (right) rammed into a truck late Friday night

juries to his head. He was rushed to a local hospital and later referred to AIIMS, where he was declared dead at 3 pm, police said.

Relatives said Pankaj, Khalil and Iqbal were close friends and would often travel together. Pankaj ran a small jewellery in Shikarpur, Iqbal was a contractor and Khalil was involved in carpentry.

"Iqbal wanted to visit Ajmer since he believed in the powers of the shrine. He wanted his son to also have an experience. Since they were inseparable friends, the others decided to come along. They stayed together and died together," said Sonu, Iqbal's

relative.

Pankaj, a father of four, had a wedding coming up in his family and was supposed to oversee its arrangements. "An engagement function of a relative was due to take place and he had promised that he will look after everyone. He did not tell us about the trip. He just took his car, a local driver and travelled to Ajmer. We did not realise that he would not come back," said Kalua, Pankaj's relative.

The car was found in a mangled state as the front part had been badly damaged. Police claim that the car was being driven at a very high speed, given the extent of the damage.

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DAV Centenary Public School, B-4, Pocket-5, Narela, New Delhi-110040		29.05.2019 11.15 a.m.	30.05.2019 11.30 a.m.	
SM Arya Public School, Road No. 45, C-Block, West Purjahi Bagh, New Delhi-110026	27.05.2019 to 12.06.2019	30.05.2019 11.15 a.m.	31.05.2019 11.30 a.m.	29.04.2019 to 08.05.2019
Jeevan Jyoti Senior Secondary School, Dayapur, Karawal Nagar, Mazaar Wali Road, Delhi-110094	09.00 a.m. to 11.00 a.m	31.05.2019 11.15 a.m.	01.06.2019 11.30 a.m.	10.00 am to 4.00 pm
N.R. Convent Senior Secondary School, Shiv Ram Park, Phase-2, Nlothi More, Nangloi, Delhi-110041		01.06.2019 11.15 a.m.	03.06.2019 11.30 a.m.	
Laxman Public School, Sarvpriya Vihar, Hauz Khas, New Delhi-110016		03.06.2019 11.15 a.m.	04.06.2019 11.30 a.m.	

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SPECIAL POLICE UNIT
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WOMEN & CHILDREN

Jamia set to make debut on LinkedIn, Instagram

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

JAMIA MILLIA Islamia will soon make its debut on Instagram and LinkedIn, making it the first central university in the city to have such a presence on social media.

JMI media coordinator Ahmed Azeem said the move is aimed at reaching out to more youngsters who are active on the digital platform.

The varsity already has a verified Facebook page with 36,718 followers. It is also considering making a Twitter debut.

The Instagram and LinkedIn pages will be formally launched by the newly-appointed Jamia Millia Islamia Vice-Chancellor, Professor Najma Akhtar.

LinkedIn will be the platform for industry interaction and for putting details of research papers published by the students of the varsity, Azeem said.

Instagram will be used to put out aesthetic pictures of the varsity and those of events inside the campus, he said. "Fifty events take place inside the varsity at a given point of time. The social media presence will help widen the reach of the university," the JMI media coordinator said.

The varsity will be available on Instagram as [jamiamiliaislamia_official](https://www.instagram.com/jamiamiliaislamia_official).

The other two prominent universities in the national capital — Delhi University and Jawaharlal Nehru University — do not have a digital presence.

TRAFFIC ADVISORY

IPL T-20 CRICKET MATCH DELHI V/S BENGALORE

On 28-04-2019 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM

LEGENDS

- THOSE NOT HAVING PARKING LABEL TO FOLLOW RED
- THOSE HAVING PARKING LABEL MAY FOLLOW BLUE ARROWS.
- P PARK & RIDE (MATA SUNDRI RD., SHANTI VAN & UNDER VELODROME FLYOVER)
- P PICK UP POINT SHUTTLE SERVICE
- D DROP OFF POINT SHUTTLE SERVICE
- T TAXI (DROP OFF / PICK UP LANE)

FIROZESHAH KOTLA GROUND, NEW DELHI

DIVERSION / RESTRICTION (AS AND WHEN REQUIRED)

There will be diversion of traffic for half an hour after conclusion of the match. No traffic shall be allowed on Bahadurshah Zafar Marg, Delhi Gate to J.L.N. Marg, from Darya Garh to Bahadurshah Zafar Marg and from Guru Nanak Chowk to Asaf Ali Road. People are requested to avoid following roads from 4.00 pm to 8.00 pm on the match day respectively when the spectators would be coming to the stadium and congestion is expected.

- Raj Ghat to JLN Marg.
- J.L.N. Marg from R/A Kamla Market to Raj Ghat.
- Asaf Ali Road from Turkman Gate to Delhi Gate.
- Bahadurshah Zafar Marg from Ram Charan Agarwal Chowk to Delhi Gate.

ENTRY TO THE STADIUM

(i) Gate Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 are located on the southern side of the Stadium & entry to these enclosures are from Bahadurshah Zafar Marg.

(ii) Gate No. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 & 15 are located on the Eastern side of the Stadium on the road and entry is from J.L.N. Marg next to Ambedkar Stadium Bus Terminal.

(iii) Gate Nos. 16, 17 & 18 are located on the Western side of the Stadium & entry is from Bahadurshah Zafar Marg near Petrol Pump.

Labeled Vehicles

Limited parking is available for labeled vehicles in the proximity of the Stadium. Display of car parking label on windscreen is mandatory. Vehicle number must be written on the parking label. Those who do not display parking label with vehicle number will not be allowed in the proximity of the stadium. Car parking label holders are advised to take Ring Road, J.L.N. Marg, Asaf Ali Road or Bahadurshah Zafar Marg. If turn at Delhi Gate is allowed. Entry to parking lots P1, P3 & P4 shall be from Bahadurshah Zafar Marg only from near the Petrol Pump.

General Vehicles

No vehicle shall be allowed to be parked on Bahadurshah Zafar Marg, Jawaharlal Nehru Marg & Ring Road from Rajhat to I.P. Flyover (both the carriageways) on the match day. Vehicles parked on these roads shall be towed away and prosecuted as per law.

PARK & RIDE

For spectators, unlabeled vehicles park and ride facility has been created at the following places:-
• Mata Sundari Parking • Shanti Van Parking • Under Velodrome Road

All the spectators coming in their vehicles shall reach these Park & Ride sites, and avail "Park & Ride" facility or walk down to reach stadium.

BUS

All buses will start their service 2 hours before the match and will continue till one hour after the start of match. The bus service from the stadium to their respective destinations will start as soon as the game ends and will continue for one hour after the match ends.

TAXI

Spectators using app based taxi and other taxis should use the service lane on Ring Road between I.P. Flyover & Rajhat crossing for drop & pickup.

SECURITY INSTRUCTIONS:

Spectators visiting the stadium are requested not to bring the following prohibited items:

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6 DECISION 2019



'People voting for leadership, stability, progress — all symbolised by Modi'

PRAKASH JAVADEKAR, Union HRD Minister and BJP's election-in-charge of Rajasthan, speaks to **DEEP MUKHERJEE** about the party's outlook going into Lok Sabha elections following the Assembly election defeat. Excerpts:

In 2014 the BJP won all 25 seats in Rajasthan. Now it is going into elections after an Assembly poll defeat. How big a challenge is it?

It's not a big challenge because people vote differently for different elections. And what was the Assembly result? If you analyse it properly, it was just 0.5 per cent vote difference, 1.5 lakh votes, that is 3 votes per booth. So it was a close fight and not a defeat. But yes, power went to the Congress... This time they are voting for leadership, stability and progress, and all these things are symbolised by (PM Narendra) Modi.

What are your thoughts on Gulab Chand Kataria's speech on Muslims? Why does the BJP target Muslims, specifically ahead of elections?

I have not heard it. I will not comment on something on which we have no confirmation...

Muslims comprise 10% of Rajasthan's population, the state shares borders with Pakistan. Is it a deliberate strategy to raise such issues to consolidate Hindu votes?

Our motto is sabka saath, sabka vikas. Modi ji always says 130 crore Indians and that is our map. We don't discriminate. Not in any social welfare scheme nor in any other aspect of national life.



Is jobs an issue? The NSSO draft data points to massive unemployment. Or is the election mostly about national security?

I differ with NSSO as it is a random sample method, a minuscule sample. We must have a system to map every employment, which is not mapped today. If there had been a real employment crisis, it would have been a Venezuela-like situation or South Africa. That is not happening because you have employment and jobs but you are not mapping them properly. I will give you examples. In higher middle class homes, there are two or three different types of domestic help. Is that employment or not? But they are not mapped as they don't have EPFO accounts. Secondly, if in the last five years, more than 1 crore passenger buses and trucks are sold, half of them will be replacements but half of them are new. So does one vehicle create three jobs or not? If we have created 1 crore acre of irrigation in five years,

1 acre of irrigation creates 1.5 jobs per acre. If we have digitised and we are a nation with 120 crore mobiles, has it created something or not?...

I don't think it's that (talking only about national security). We talk of development, we talk of 2.5 crore pucca houses created for the poor, 4 crore free electricity connections, 6 crore free gas connections, 9 crore toilets, 35 crore Jan Dhan accounts in which Rs 4,35,000 crore is transferred every year... So, we talk of development, national security and other aspects, from Article 370 to Ram Janmabhoomi...

You have been HRD Minister for almost three years. What are the gaps you have identified?

We have given three things. Firstly, learning outcomes, because we believe that everything has to be based on learning outcomes. We have defined them, have done teacher training for that and made many efforts to improve the quality of government education at school level. We are also introducing Operation Digital Board in all schools so that people get modern education and education that is more understandable. In higher education, we have improved the access equity with more scholarships and interest-free education loans. We have made large investment in research and innovation. Now, we want to expand on that further.

Some states, particularly Rajasthan, have looked at modifying history textbooks. At the central level, is there a holistic

plan to look at the way history is taught?

School textbooks are made by state boards and SCERTs. We can't have a common book all over the country because every state has different cultural ethos, environment and history. This is a state government domain and we only advise them to be national policy-compliant, which means that a national curriculum framework-compliant book should be there.

There was no new education policy in five years, though two committees were set up.

It's ready and we are waiting for the election result, after which it will be before the people...

The BJP has allied with Hanuman Beniwal, a known detractor of Vasundhara Raje. Does this mean Raje's influence is diminishing?

I don't think so... every decision is taken jointly. Vasundhara ji is our mass leader here and ex-chief minister. So we always consult on all issues, and Beniwal's admission was also cleared by her.

What are the election issues for the BJP?

This is an all-India election. People are voting to elect an able Prime Minister. And who are the candidates? On one hand it's Modi, and others I don't know... Rahul, Akhilesh, Mayawati, Mamata, Chandrababu, they are fighting for second slot. So, they are voting for an able leader, stability and progress of economy. We were the 11th economy in 2014 and now we are the sixth largest economy. In five years, we will be the fourth largest economy. And lastly, national security. These are three issues on which people are voting.

SEAT WATCH MUNGER, BIHAR

Litmus test for popularity of Grand Alliance

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, APRIL 27

THE BATTLE for the Munger Lok Sabha constituency in eastern Bihar can be viewed as a test case for the popularity for the Grand Alliance in the state. Its candidate, Nilam Devi, is the wife of Mokama MLA Anant Singh, a strongman with several criminal cases pending against him. Singh, an independent legislator, had wanted the ticket for himself, but settled for his wife getting the nod on a Congress ticket.

Leader of the Opposition and RJD leader Tejashwi Prasad Yadav, who had been averse to the Congress fielding Devi. However, as the RJD also gave tickets to the wives of convicted criminals Mohammed Shahabuddin and Rajballabh Yadav, the party could not oppose the Congress giving its ticket to Devi, and Tejashwi eventually campaigned for her.

Devi will face off against Bihar's Water Resources Minister and JD(U) legislator Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh. Both candidates are upper caste Bhumihars, and there is an obvious chance that the community's votes will be split between the two.

However, the key question is whether the Yadavs, who had always resisted Anant Singh's dominance in the taal — a vast low-lying area between Mokama and Barha — will vote for Devi.

Yadavs and Bhumihars are generally seen as hostile to each other.

In Munger, there are approximately 2.5 lakh Bhumihar voters, 3 lakh voters from the OBC Kurmi community and the EBC Dhanuk community, about 80,000 voters from the OBC Kushwaha community, 2.25 lakh Yadav voters, 1.25 lakh Muslim voters, 1.5 lakh voters from the EBC Nishad or Sahni community,



Anant Singh campaigning for his wife in Munger. Express

and around 2.5 lakh scheduled caste voters, which includes around 75,000 Manjhis.

The Congress hopes to get votes from the Muslim, Yadav, Kushwaha, Manjhi and the Dhanuk communities, along with Bhumihars votes.

The JD (U), on the other hand, is looking for the maximum number of non-Yadav and non-Muslim votes.

Munger has six Assembly segments — Jamalpur, Lakhisarai, Suryagarha, Barh, Mokama, and Munger. The JD (U) is confident of winning the Lok Sabha seat as Lalan Singh had won from here with a margin of over 1.75 lakh in 2009, though they lost the seat in 2014, with IJP's Veena Devi riding the Narendra Modi wave.

An RLSP leader said the JD (U) may hold an advantage in Jamalpur, Munger and Barh, but the Congress can lead in Mokama, Suryagarha and Lakhisarai. "With Tejashwi campaigning in favour of Nilam Devi, she can now get good support of Yadavs as well."

JD (U) MLC Neeraj Kumar, however, said: "Let Congress be in a fool's paradise. This battle is just about margin of victory for us."

KENDRAPARA ODISHA

For Naveen, a 'personal mission' to defend turf against ex-BJD MP

SAMPAD PATNAIK
KENDRAPARA, APRIL 27

ODISHA CHIEF Minister Naveen Patnaik drew huge crowds in Kendrapara on Saturday. As the BJD leader emerged multiple times on the roof of his bus, by means of a special lift, to address people, hundreds of BJD flags were seen and the sound of conch shells, the party symbol, filled the air. Youths were seen clicking selfies with Naveen through the glass window of his bus.

According to BJD leaders, Patnaik is on a "personal mission" to defend Kendrapara, the Lok Sabha seat his party has been winning since 1998. This time, former BJD leader and now BJP candidate Baijayant Panda is in the fray against BJD's Anubhav Mohanty, a Rajya Sabha MP and Odia film actor.

The BJD campaign pitch is *beimaan* (dishonest) versus *swabhimaan* (pride). The BJP meanwhile is referring to Mohanty's acting background as reel hero versus real hero (Panda).

Earlier, Kendrapara was a bastion for anti-Congress politics in the state since 1957. The seat sent Naveen's father Biju Patnaik thrice to Parliament in 1977, 1980 and 1984. "Kendrapara is to BJD what Amethi and Rae Bareilly are to the Congress. The CM has worked very hard to retain the seat. But not since Pyari Mohapatra has Naveen faced an opponent with massive resources at his disposal," said a senior BJD leader, referring to Panda.

Pyari Mohan Mohapatra, a former IAS officer and aide to Biju Patnaik, is believed to have helped Naveen in his initial years in politics. Mohapatra, who grew to be very power-



Naveen Patnaik's road show in Kendrapara

ful in Odisha, fell out with Naveen in 2012. Mohapatra could not retain his political influence after exiting the BJD.

Naveen is also trying to counter any impact of PM Narendra Modi's rally in Kendrapara and the popularity of Panda, BJD's two-time MP from the seat. Panda quit the BJD after a fallout with Naveen and joined BJP.

Panda, who also toured Kendrapara, had K V Singh Deo and Sambit Patra, on the campaign trail. He clicked pictures in small roadside shops, interacted with children, emerged from his car to loud cheers.

"BJD is running goonda raj in Kendrapara. The party is terrorising people," said Union minister Dharmendra Pradhan in a press conference.

The BJP on Saturday notified the CEO (Odisha) that 97 top leaders of BJD are spread across the constituency. The party has requested for the exit of all such leaders as well as people who are not on the voter list from the constituency. A day earlier, Panda warned on Twitter that BJD may "stage" an egg attack on the CM "to seek sympathy votes".

replaced Malik with Hooda.

Sonipat came into existence in 1977 after being carved out of Rohtak parliamentary constituency. It has nearly 15 lakh voters, of which over 5.5 lakh are from Jat community, nearly 1.9 lakh Brahmins, 1.1 lakh from Punjabi community, and nearly 80,000 from Baniya community.

The Jat votebank is set to be divided as two prominent Jat leaders, Hooda and Chautala, are contesting. Even Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) has nominated a Jat leader, Surinder Chhikara — a businessman who has a hold among youth and in the rural belt of the constituency.

In February this year, Haryana decided to grant reservation to the extent of 10 per cent each to economically weaker sections (EWS) in case of direct recruitment to Group A, B, C and D posts in all departments, boards, corporations and local bodies and in admissions to all educational institutions. The EWS was defined as those with a family income less than Rs 6 lakh per annum. The decision taken by the state cabinet implied that Jats and five other castes — Jat Sikhs, Rors, Bishnois, Tyagis and Mulla Jat/Muslim Jat — who were granted reservation as BC(C) in

BANSWARA RAJASTHAN

Buoyed by Assembly poll wins, tribal party in Rajasthan throws challenge to BJP, Congress

DEEP MUKHERJEE
JAIPUR, APRIL 27

"ADIVASIYON KO dharmantarit kar rahe hain ye log... adivasi Hindu nahi hai (They are trying to convert tribals. Adivasis are not Hindus)," said Kantilal Roat (43), the Bharatiya Tribal Party's Banswara candidate.

Roat, a farmer whose wife is an ASHA supervisor, is confident of defeating both the Congress and BJP while fighting under the BJP's banner.

The influence of the BJP has been consistently growing in the tribal-dominated Rajasthan districts of Banswara, Dungarpur and Udaipur ever since the party pulled off a shocker in the Rajasthan Assembly elections in December last year by winning two constituencies — Sagwara and Chorasai — in Dungarpur district.

"The Hindu Marriage act does not apply on adivasis. They take the tribal people towards the Vanvasi Kalyan Parishad and then try to make them Hindus. They want to end our traditions of worshipping nature and are trying to introduce new gods and goddesses whom we don't know or worship," said Roat.

The BJP has emerged as a fierce critic of the RSS-affiliated Vanvasi Kalyan Parishad and Christian organisations working in the area, accusing them of converting tribals and reducing their population to just a vote bank.

Founded in 2017 by former JD(U) leader and Gujarat MLA Chhotu Vasava, the BJP, according to Roat, was invited to Rajasthan as no party was willing to raise the issues that concern the tribal population.

The BJP is contesting from four Lok Sabha seats in Rajasthan — Banswara, Udaipur, Jodhpur and Chittorgarh — and is expected to give tough competition to the Congress and BJP.



Bharatiya Tribal Party candidate Kantilal Roat campaigns in Banswara. Express

While the Congress has fielded three-time MP Tarachand Bhagora, the BJP's candidate is former state minister Kanakmal Kataria who has a long association with the Vanvasi Kalyan Parishad.

Both the candidates have accused the BJP of being a B-team of the Congress and BJP, but the BJP has maintained that it is fighting the elections against the policies of the two national parties.

"We are receiving great support and BJP will win in Banswara. The Congress is behind the BJP. It is absolutely wrong to say that adivasis are not Hindus. The adivasi culture is about nationalism and cultural nationalism. Adivasis believe in Hindu culture. Foreign powers and Christian missionaries are behind this as they don't want to see Modi ji as prime minister," BJP's candidate Kataria said.

The Banswara Lok Sabha seat is reserved

for the scheduled tribe and comprises the Assembly segments of Dungarpur, Sagwara, Chorasai, Ghatol, Garhi, Banswara, Bagidora and Kushalgarh. The Congress holds three, while the BJP and BJP hold two of these Assembly segments each.

In the Banswara Lok Sabha constituency where the Bheels form the majority of population, the BJP has focused its campaign around nationalism and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's image while the Congress is trying to gain ground with anti-Modi rhetoric. The BJP has also brought in the demand for a separate state, Bhil Pradesh.

People from the tribal outfit campaign in villages, holding the BJP's flag which has an autorickshaw as its symbol, riding motorcycles to lesser-known hamlets, speaking about the fifth schedule of Constitution, the importance of natural resources and exploitation by political parties.

Occasionally, they chant 'Jai Johar,' a tribal slogan which is an appeal to nature for keeping everyone safe.

"Everyday, land belonging to adivasis are being grabbed whether it being in the name of school, hospital or railways. Homes of adivasis are being vacated on this pretext of development and both the Congress and the BJP are in collusion with the corporate. For several years now we have been fighting for a state, Bhil Pradesh, comprising areas of Dungarpur, Banswara, Udaipur, Sirohi, Chittorgarh, Pali and areas of Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra," said Roat, who holds a master's degree in political science along with a bachelor's degree in education.

The Congress camp appears apprehensive after the BJP's success in the Assembly polls. The Congress finished third in Chorasai and Sagwara where the BJP defeated the BJP candidate by 12,934 and 4,582 votes. The BJP was the runner-up in Aspur Assembly segment.

"This is an election for saving the Constitution... this Bharatiya Tribal Party has also come up. I want to tell those youths that it's true that you have won two seats but you have again put up your candidates... It shouldn't happen that you don't end up winning and BJP gets the advantage. Avoid this, the Congress is your party... and has always thought about you and will continue to do so," Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said at Congress president Rahul Gandhi's rally in Dungarpur on April 23.

Velaram Ghoghra (68), president of the BJP's Rajasthan unit, claimed that they were forced to fight the Assembly elections after the state government harassed them with the help of police. "Dharmantarana ab tak kiya inhone, ab nahi kara payenge. Ab ham inko badal denge (They did conversions till now but now they won't be able to do so. Now, we will change them). Our god is only nature, not the ones that RSS and BJP or the Christian missionaries tell us to follow," said Ghoghra.

Echoes of Jat quota violence in poll-bound Sonipat

VARINDER BHATIA
CHANDIGARH, APRIL 27

IT HAS been more than three years since the Jat reservation agitation rocked Haryana, but the echoes of the stir can still be heard in Sonipat, which was part of the epicentre of the violence that broke out in February 2016 and left 30 people dead.

The Lok Sabha constituency is now witnessing a churning of sorts. A four-time MP who was Haryana chief minister for two consecutive terms, the sitting MP who belongs to the ruling party at the Centre, and the scion of a family that has defined politics in the state for several decades are seeking to enter the 17th Lok Sabha from here. They are Congress's Bhupinder Singh Hooda, BJP's Ramesh Chander Kaushik and Jannayak Janata Party's Digvijay Chautala.

Of the 11 Lok Sabha contests that Sonipat has witnessed, Jat candidates won nine times. A non-Jat candidate won in 1996 — Arvind Kumar, Independent — and in 2014 — BJP's Kaushik. Kaushik had defeated Congress' Jagbir Singh Malik. Congress, however, has

Haryana, shall be eligible for the EWS quota, till their ongoing court case for Backward Class status was decided.

As campaigning picked up pace, the candidates have been accusing each other of being an outsider. While Hooda comes from Rohtak, Chautala is from Sirsa. Kaushik is a Sonipat resident and registered as voter in Ganaur Assembly constituency.

Chautala has also accused Hooda of being a "non-serious" candidate. Hooda, on the other hand, told *The Sunday Express* that he "won't be facing any difficulty in Sonipat", since the people are with him. "Even at the peak of Modi wave in 2014, five of our six MLAs won in Sonipat district. It shows that the people of Sonipat are with Congress party. We are strong here," Hooda said.

The ruling BJP in the state, however, holds Hooda and the Congress responsible for the violence during Jat reservation agitation. BJP leaders are now targeting Hooda's former political adviser Prof Virender as he was arrested on charges of instigating violence during the agitation. Hooda is referring to Prakash Singh Commission that had brought out lapses on the part of government in dealing with the agitation.

EXPLAINED

Issue caught in legal battle, quota on hold

THE JAT quota is likely to be a major election issue in Haryana, where all 10 seats go to the polls on May 12.

Jats in Haryana have not yet got the promised 10-per cent reservation in education and government jobs, as it remains mired in a legal battle.

The issue is particularly likely to have repercussions in Sonipat constituency, which has a large proportion of Jat population and was affected by the quota violence.

Pragya's candidature has hurt Shivraj image, says BJP leader

MILIND GHATWAI
BHOPAL, APRIL 27

SLAMMING THE BJP for fielding Malegaon blast accused Pragya Singh Thakur in the Lok Sabha polls, party leader Fatima Siddique, who was the BJP's only Muslim candidate in last year's Madhya Pradesh Assembly elections, has said that the decision has affected former Chief Minister and the party's tallest leader in the state Shivraj Singh Chouhan's image among the minority community.

Fatima, who was the BJP candidate from Bhopal (North) seat and lost to Congress's Arif Aqueel, said she has conveyed her feelings to the party.

"She (Thakur) should not campaign in Muslim-dominated areas. I don't think she can win. It (her candidature) will affect other areas and lead to polarisation," she told *The Sunday Express*.

Fatima, who has refused to attend BJP's campaign meetings in protest, said the BJP must have fielded Thakur with some calculation, but she has upset all calculations.

'Accused tortured at behest of Cong leaders'

Ballia: Those accused in the 2008 Malegaon blast case were tortured at the "behest" of senior Congress leaders, Maj (retired) Ramesh Chandra Upadhyay, who is also an accused in the case and contesting the Lok Sabha polls, has alleged. PTI

Referring to Thakur's comments on the Babri Masjid, Fatima said people are hurt. "She has hurt everyone by commenting on Hemant Karkare, a martyr. If she apologises to Muslims for her comments on Babri Masjid in clean, simple words, and to the family of Karkare, I may think of campaigning for her," Fatima said.

Fatima maintained that many in the BJP are against Pragya Thakur's candidature but not everyone is as vocal as her. She also clarified that she is not opposed to the party but is "against the candidate".

7 DECISION 2019



BALLOTIN

Criminal defamation complaint: Rahul gets court summons

Patna: Patna Chief Judicial Magistrate Court on Saturday summoned AICC president Rahul Gandhi to appear before it in a defamation complaint filed by Bihar deputy CM Sushil Kumar Modi. The court has asked Rahul to appear before it on May 20. The CJM issued the summons on Saturday after it recorded the statement of the Bihar deputy CM on Friday, a day after he had filed a case against the Congress chief for saying at a Karnataka meeting on April 13, "Why all thieves have Modi surname". **ENS**

Nitin Gadkari faints during campaign rally in Maharashtra

Pune: Union minister Nitin Gadkari fainted during a poll campaign rally at Shirdi in Maharashtra's Ahmednagar district on Saturday. He stopped his speech midway and swayed before BJP workers caught him and immediately gave him a chocolate and lime juice, Nitin Kapse, general secretary of the BJP's Ahmednagar unit, said. **ENS**



Another FIR filed against Azam Khan, 14th this month

Lucknow: Yet another FIR was lodged against senior SP leader and SP-BSP-RLD alliance candidate from Rampur, Mohammad Azam Khan, for violating the model code of conduct and making objectionable comments against the district administration and police while delivering a speech at Shahabad area of Rampur on Thursday. This is the 14th case lodged against Azam this month. Polling was held on Rampur seat on April 18. **ENS**

Cong calls for re-poll in Tripura LS seat, threatens to move SC

Agartala: The Congress in Tripura on Saturday threatened to move the Supreme Court if a re-poll is not ordered in at least 850 of the 1,679 polling stations in the West Tripura Lok Sabha constituency, where polling was held on April 11. The Congress and the CPI(M) have alleged large-scale rigging by the ruling BJP in West Tripura seat and demanded re-poll in many booths. **PTI**

Modi works 18 hours a day, Rahul takes leave every 2 months: Shah

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MORADA, SUKINDA (ODISHA), APRIL 27

BJP PRESIDENT Amit Shah on Saturday took a potshots at his Congress counterpart Rahul Gandhi, saying he is no match for Prime Minister Narendra Modi who has worked 18 hours a day without taking any leave in the last 20 years whereas Rahul takes a break every two months.

Addressing back-to-back rallies in tribal-dominated Mayurbhanj and mineral-rich Jajpur Lok Sabha constituencies of Odisha, the BJP chief accused Congress leaders of advocating a soft approach towards separatists.

With Odisha witnessing assembly election along with that of Parliament, Shah targeted Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, accusing him of sheltering culprits of chit fund and mining scams in the state.

"Modi ji is hard working, dedicated and honest. The Prime Minister, who works 18 hours a day, has not taken a single day's leave in last 20 years as he has dedicated himself to the nation," Shah said. In sharp contrast, Shah said, "Rahul Baba (Gandhi) goes on leave every two months. His people keep looking for him. Even his mother gets worried as she has no clue."

Shah slammed Shatrughan Sinha, who has joined Congress after quitting BJP, for his remark mentioning Muhammad Ali Jinnah. "Congress leaders are praising Jinnah who was instrumental in the division of India. This shows their character," he said.

Attacking the Congress on its approach towards terrorism and national security, Shah also lashed out at National Conference leader Omar Abdullah on his remarks on a separate prime minister for Kashmir.



Congress president Rahul Gandhi with party general secretary and sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra in Rae Bareilly on Saturday. **PTI**

PM muzzling voice of people, says Priyanka

ASAD REHMAN
LUCKNOW, APRIL 27

CONGRESS GENERAL secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra targeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday, alleging he had muzzled the voice of people speaking up for their rights and that he was scared of opposition and criticism.

Addressing a rally in Barabanki, Priyanka said, "When struggling people raise their voice and demand what is theirs, that voice is muzzled. The people are beaten up and put in jail. People are suppressed... Those asking for their rights. I will tell you that if a leader, like the PM, comes and tells you that I have worked for you and done a favour... This is wrong. Nobody is doing you a favour. They are your rights... When you raise your voice, it is the responsibility of every leader to hear you... This government wants to suppress the voice of the people. If someone opposes him, the person has to face atrocities. Their voice is muzzled. If he is so able and powerful. He has a 56-inch chest, then why is he scared of opposition and criticism..."

She also alleged that Modi had forgotten the poor of this country and only cared about power.

"What happened in five years? This leader who used to come and make big promises... his connection with the public has been broken. He used to say he had risen from poverty, but he has forgotten the poor... Sometimes, when a person gets power, due to the power's

May move court over poll code 'violations' by Modi, Shah: Cong

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

HAVING PETITIONED the Election Commission several times against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP chief Amit Shah over alleged model code violations, the Congress on Saturday said it may now approach courts seeking action against them.

The Congress said the model code of conduct has become a 'Modi Code of Conduct'.

"We are astonished and sadly compelled to say that the model code of conduct has become the 'Modi Code of Conduct'... We are saddened to say that as if in the second word in the Election Commission, the letter 'C' has been dropped and it has become the Election Omission as far as Modi-Shah duo is concerned," Congress spokesperson Abhishek Singhvi said.

He said the Congress has given 37 representations in the last five to six weeks, out of which ten can be categorized in three categories - "hate speeches, virulent, divisive, po-

BJP hits back at MNS, rolls out videos to counter its allegations

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, APRIL 27

TWENTY DAYS after Raj Thackeray began his 'Lava Re Video (play the video)' campaign against Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the BJP on Saturday rolled out its own videos to counter the allegations made by the MNS leader, with its own catchline: 'Aa Baghach Re Video (now, just see the videos)'.

Addressing mediapersons, Mumbai BJP president Ashish Shelar addressed Thackeray as a "friend" and said "Mitra, tu chuklas (friend, you have erred)" as he showed video clips purportedly countering allegations made by the MNS chief at public rallies across Maharashtra.

One of the videos was of the three service chiefs showing parts of the AMRAM missile to prove that Pakistan used F-16 fighter jets against India after the Balakot airstrike.

attachment, the person has a misunderstanding that the power belongs to him... This PM, and this government has forgotten that it is the people who gives them power," she said.

Priyanka added that one only sees Modi in advertisements.

"When I meet the youth, they tell me they have no employment... They have not been provided jobs by the government. On the other hand, you see that there are large-scale advertisements. Wherever you go, you see the PM's face either on hoardings, in newspapers, if you switch on the TV, or if you travel in trains you see it on tiffin box. And you are told that the country is developing very fast. It is moving forward so fast as if nothing happened in the past," she said.

The Congress leader also said that the money taken from farmers under the crop insurance scheme is only going to capitalists

"You pay for crop insurance, but when problems occur, you do not get the money. I don't know if you know how many capitalists are becoming rich from your insurance money. They gain Rs 10,000 crore from the insurance money because the money is taken from every farmer in the country... The money is going to the two-three capitalists..."

She also appealed to the people in Barabanki to vote for Congress candidate Tanuj Punia. Tanuj is AICC general secretary P L Punia's son, and will face-off against SP's Ram Sagar Rawat and the BJP's Upendra Rawat.

Barabanki, a reserved seat, will vote on May 6 in the fifth phase.

larizing", both by Shah and Modi.

"We have a right to approach the courts seeking action over model code violations... We can exercise that option... the mega policeman has turned a blind eye," Singhvi told a press conference, adding that silence of the EC can be construed as approval.

"Never has there been a more audacious set of individuals who for petty party electoral gains have turned a blind eye as if the Election Commission does not exist in this country, the model code of conduct does not exist and there is no Constitution of India, no level playing field," he said.

Singhvi also led a delegation of leaders from five parties, including the TMC, RJD, NCP and the TDP and asked it to give directions against use of the BJP's "party name" in ballot paper.

"On April 26, during the commissioning of EVMs and specifically at Barrackpore parliamentary constituency (in West Bengal), it was discovered that the symbol of the Bharatiya Janata Party was different from the one notified with the Election Commission of



MNS chief Raj Thackeray

Shelar said that it was "proof" that India had shot down the Pakistani aircraft. "On what basis is Raj dismissing our armed forces' action? Why is the MNS president speaking the language of Pakistan?" he asked.

In response to Thackeray's charge that NSA Ajit Doval was holding "secret meetings" with his Pakistani counterpart, Shelar said the meetings were held in December 2017 to facilitate the visit of the mother of Kulbhushan Jadhav, who is being held captive in Pakistan on terrorism and espionage charges, to see her son.

Rahul: Foolishness of demonetisation, GST not done by anyone in 70 years

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
RAE BAREILY, APRIL 27

HITTING OUT at Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his strident criticism of the Congress, party president Rahul Gandhi Saturday said in the last 70 years, the "foolishness of demonetisation and Gabbar Singh Tax" was not done by anybody.

He was addressing an election meeting in Unchahar in Rae Bareilly from where UPA chairperson and his mother Sonia Gandhi is seeking re-election to the Lok Sabha.

"In the past 70 years, the foolishness of demonetisation and Gabbar Singh Tax (Gandhi's coinage for the Goods and Services Tax or GST) was not done by anyone," he said.

His remarks come against the backdrop of repeated attacks by the Prime Minister on the Congress, holding it responsible for ills since the country got Independence.

Gandhi also accused Modi of not wanting to fill 22 lakh vacant posts in the government. "Some 22 lakh jobs are vacant in the government. Modi did not want to fill these vacant posts and only wants to help his friends. We will give these 22 lakh jobs in one year and 10 lakh jobs in panchayats," he said.

Charging the PM of taking away money from "our pocket, your pocket", he promised that the Congress will ensure that the people get back their money.

India. It was found that the initials 'BJP' were written under the symbol of the Bharatiya Janata Party," the petition said.

"It can be clearly seen that the initials of Bharatiya Janata Party i.e BJP are printed at the bottom of Lotus symbol. (It is highly objectionable and in blatant violation...of the Election Conduct Rules 1961 and Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968," it said.

The ballot papers issued for other Constituencies in West Bengal do not contain the initials of the BJP, the parties said, and argued that the "symbol approved for Bharatiya Janata Party is 'Lotus' and does not contain the word 'BJP' in any iteration."

'EC partisan towards BJP'

In Mumbai, former Union finance minister P Chidambaram accused the EC of being partisan. "The EC has failed the people of India. It has been extremely partisan towards the BJP. It has been reluctant to take action over blatant poll violations by the ruling party," he told mediapersons.

Modi hits back at Maya: I'm from most backward caste

MAULSHREE SETH
KANNAUJ, APRIL 27

MAINTAINING THAT the country did not know his caste so far, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday thanked BSP chief Mayawati, Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav and the Congress for starting a discussion on it.

Modi addressed rallies in Kanauj, Hardoi and Sitapur. The BJP had won the latter two seats in 2014.

Modi told the crowd that he comes from not just a backward community but in fact from an "ati-pichhda (most backward)" caste. Although he does not believe in the politics of caste, he said these opposition parties have dragged him into this debate by raising the issue of his caste.

The Congress, SP and BSP have only one aim, he said. "Jaat paat japna...janta ka maal apna (playing politics of caste, and pocket people's money)."

Calling the alliance leaders "maha milawati log (adulterated people)", Modi said, "Meri jaati to itni chhoti hai ki gaon mein ek-aadh ghar hi hota hai. Main toh pichhde nahi, ati-pichhde mein paida hua hoon. Aap merey muh se bulwa rahi ho toh bol raha hoon. (My caste is so low that in a village there are only a few houses from that caste. I do not belong to just backward caste but was born into a most backward community. I am saying this because you are forcing me to)."

Mayawati reacted within hours. Addressing the media in Lucknow, she said, "He (Modi) said in Kanauj that his opponents think of him as neech (lowly) — that Akhilesh and Behen-ji (Mayawati) have called him neech... This is a mischief. I never called him neech. Instead, with all respect, I said he belongs to an upper caste. Where does this calling him neech come from?"

Even then, she maintained, the BJP and Modi consider Dalits as "neech and small — the entire country knows that."

At his rally in Kanauj, Modi claimed that India is the biggest target of terrorists and that "factories of terrorism" operate in Pakistan even today. But the "awsarwadi (opportunist)" Opposition, he said, has accepted lies of Pakistan and is asking for evidence of surgical strike "only to defeat Modi".

Alleging that the SP-BSP combine supports terrorists, Modi said, "Sirf aur sirf Modi ko harane ke liye Pakistan ke jhooth ko sach mante ho, Pakistan ka hero banne ka khwab padhte ho...Surgical strike karni wala humare sainikon se saboot maangte ho. Mat bhuliye ki



PM Modi in Kanauj. Vishal Srivastava

ye wahi log hai jo Delhi ke Batla House mein atanki ke maare jane par aansu bahate hain (You accept Pakistan's lies only to defeat Modi; you dream of becoming a hero for Pakistan, and seek proof of surgical strike from our soldiers. Do not forget that these are the same people who had cried at the death of terrorists in the Batla House encounter in Delhi)."

He also said: "Bhoolna mat kaise Samajwadi Party ne Babasaheb Ambedkar ka apmaan kiya thha... Yeh BSP ne bhula diya hai. Yaad kariye, BSP ne Babasaheb ke naam pe medical college ka naam rakha thha. Samajwadi sarkar ayi toh usne Babasaheb ke naam ki patti ko ukhar ke phenk diya taha (do not forget that the SP had shown disrespect to Ambedkar. The BSP has forgotten it, but do recall that the BSP had constructed a medical college and named it after Babasaheb. But after the SP government came in, it threw away his nameplate)."

Today, he added, "Behen-ji is happily seeking vote for that same SP — for power, for chair, and to defeat Modi. She is hugging those who had shown disrespect to Babasaheb."

On Friday, addressing a joint rally with Akhilesh Yadav and RLD chief Ajit Singh in Orai area of Jalaun constituency, Mayawati had said, "When he (Modi) formed the government in Gujarat, he got his caste, which came under forward castes, included in the backward category... He calls himself backward so he can get your votes...he is fake."

The BSP chief's riposte came a day after Modi had, on Thursday, accused opposition parties of "distributing caste certificates".

-- WITH ENDS, LUCKNOW

CBI CASE IN SUGAR MILLS DISINVESTMENT

Had no role, Centre misusing CBI to spread misconception for poll gains, says Mayawati

ASAD REHMAN
LUCKNOW, APRIL 27

A DAY after the CBI filed an FIR on alleged irregularities in sugar mill disinvestment in Uttar Pradesh during her tenure as the chief minister, BSP chief Mayawati on Saturday said that she as the then chief minister, she had "no role in the sale of sugar mills", and accused the BJP of misusing Central agencies for electoral gains.

Addressing the media at the BSP office in Lucknow, she said the case is being given a political colour by using a CBI probe. "When the matter is so old, now during the elections, for a CBI probe to be issued... This is a clear example of misuse of CBI," she said.

She said: "From my side, there were no order or a decision. But the decision was taken by the Cabinet. Now the issue is being blown out of proportion..."

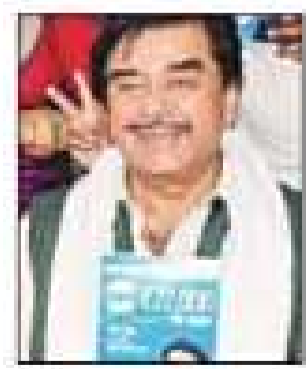
In 'slip of tongue', Shatrughan calls Jinnah member of Cong parivar

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BHOPAL, APRIL 27

CONGRESS LEADER Shatrughan Sinha drew criticism after he described Pakistan founder Muhammad Ali Jinnah as part of the Congress family.

The actor-turned-politician later described his comment as a slip of tongue.

Speaking at a rally in support of Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath's son Nakul Nath at Saunsar in Chhindwara district, Sinha had said, "Ye Congress parivar Mahatma Gandhi se lekar Sardar Vallabh bhai Patel se lekar Muhammad Ali Jinnah se lekar Jawaharlal Nehru... Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi... Rahul Gandhi... Inke pahle Subhash Chandra Bose inki party hai jinka desh ki tarakki mein desh ki azadi mein sabse mahatvapurna yoddan raha isliye ham yaha aaye (This Congress family, which ranges from Mahatma Gandhi to Sardar Vallabh bhai Patel, from Muhammad Ali Jinnah to



Shatrughan Sinha releases an election campaign book in Patna on Saturday. **PTI**

Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi... Before them it is the party of Subhash Chandra Bose who played the most significant role in the freedom struggle. That is why I am here)."

After he drew criticism for his remarks, Sinha said that he wanted to mention Maulana Abul Kalam Azad but took Jinnah's name by mistake.

Chouhan slammed Sinha and accused him of praising Jinnah and speaking the language of Pakistan. Chouhan addressed rallies in support of BJP candidates in Chhindwara district.